

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-12, 15-18, 44-59, 65-74, and 78 are currently active in this case. Claims 2-5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 75-77, 79-86 have been canceled (Applicants respectfully request cancellation without prejudice); and 15 and 78 have been amended. Each amended claim is supported by the specification and claims as originally submitted and no new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gomez et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,134,418, hereinafter *Gomez*) in view of *Yamashita* (U.S. Patent No. 5,268,765); Claims 3-5 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by *Gomez* in view of *Oglesby* (U.S. Patent No. 6,448,787); Claims 5 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by *Hardman* (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,490) in view of *Oglesby* (U.S. Patent No. 6,448,787); Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by *Hardman* (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,490) in view of *Trask, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,122,807, hereinafter *Trask*); Claims 14 and 75-76 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Gomez*; Claim 77 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable by *Gomez* in view of *Trask*; Claims 79-86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gomez* in view of *Marsh, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,539,204, hereinafter *Marsh*).

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's identification of allowable subject matter in Claims 11-12, 15-18, 65-74 and 78, and the allowance of Claims 44-59.

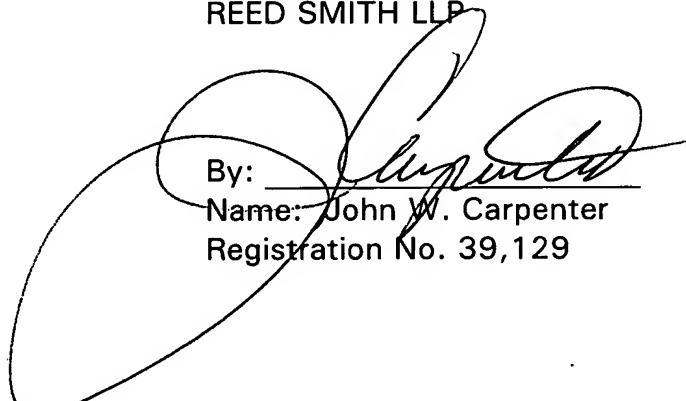
Applicants have amended Claims 15 and 78 to be in independent form including all the limitations of their respective base and intervening claims. Therefore, Claims 15 and 78 incorporate the subject matter already identified as being allowable. Accordingly Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 15 and 78

are patentable. Claims 11-12, 16, 18, 65-74 depend from Claim 15 and therefore are also respectfully submitted as being patentable. Claims 44-59 have been allowed. All other claims have been cancelled.

Consequently, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and it is respectfully submitted that this case is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication and which may be required under 37 CFR §1.78 to Deposit Account No. 50-2603, referencing Attorney Docket No. 355053.00700. A duplicate sheet is attached.

Respectfully submitted,
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